

## dropping the mask

**SURVEY.** You won't find these anonymous portraits on the front page of the media. These non-events are nevertheless intense emotional moments that mark everyone's lives. Over the course of an all-out investigation conducted in greater Montreal between 2008 and 2010, the artist Caroline Hayeur took up in her own manner (almost) every photographic trade: investigative photojournalist, casting photographer, sports photographer, family photographer, detective photographer, documentary photographer, breaking news reporter, etc., in search of choice encounters both private and collective.

**SEISMOGRAPHY.** Between sexual coming and going with the Grim Reaper, a multitude of grimacing faces and prostrated, exultant, repelled, resigned or frozen bodies were captured without the least bit of resistance on the part of the models. The artist takes aim at those decisive moments—more powerful than oneself!—when we break free and are no longer ourselves. Direct access to the soul? To the animal within us? The emotions are liberated, the artist scrutinises human nature at work, *in vivo*.

**JAW DROPPING.** In disparate contexts, we easily recognise a baby being born, people engaged in activities “soft” (sports, leisure) and “hard” (giving birth, dominating, extreme sports). An astonishing fact: many facies associated with pleasure, suffering, trance and abstract wincing, have the same look.

**UNVARNISHED.** The originality of Hayeur's project is that she doesn't spare herself: she approaches strangers, but also explores the people around her. In this sense, she imposes on herself and the people she knows an identical protocol: to “confess” without reserve. Her involvement thus bewilders any criticism of voyeurism or exhibitionism.

**COMMON DENOMINATOR.** The panoptic vision created by the way the work is hung imprisons the viewer in the gallery like a “fortified enclosure”. In bringing Charles Le Brun's *Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les passions* (“Method for Learning to Draw the Passions”) up to date, the prison-house of emotions captured by Hayeur in *Humanitas* reminds us that no one can escape it. EG \_Translated by Timothy BARNARD

De la série *Humanitas*  
Impressions jet d'encre, 45,72 x 60,96 cm, 2010

**Caroline Hayeur** vit et travaille à Montréal. Membre du collectif de photographes Agence Stock Photo depuis une quinzaine d'années, elle explore les formes de socialisation contemporaines à travers une quête de convivialité et de ritualité. Ses projets *Rituel festif: Portraits de la scène rave à Montréal, Tanz Party* et *Amalgat: danse, tradition et autres spiritualités* ont fait l'objet de publications et ont été présentés au Québec et à l'étranger. Avec la musicienne Myléna Bergeron, elle a formé le duo *Les Ying Yang Ladies*, qui œuvre en arts médiatiques. Caroline Hayeur enseigne le photojournalisme à l'Université du Québec à Montréal.

**Caroline Hayeur** lives and works in Montreal. A member of the photographers' collective Agence Stock Photo for fifteen years, she explores contemporary forms of socialisation through a search for conviviality and ritual. Her projects *Rituel festif: Portraits de la scène rave à Montréal, Tanz Party* and *Amalgat: danse, tradition et autres spiritualités* have been the subject of publications and have been exhibited in Quebec and abroad. With the musician Myléna Bergeron, she formed the media art duo *Les Ying Yang Ladies*. Caroline Hayeur teaches photojournalism at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

**Caroline Hayeur remercie le Conseil des arts et lettres du Québec,**  
ainsi que tous les gens qui l'ont laissée être témoin de leur intimité.

Caroline Hayeur thanks the Conseil des arts et lettres du Québec  
and all the people who allowed her to observe their private moments.

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au centre VU afin de réaliser *Humanitas*.

Caroline Hayeur benefited from an artist's residency  
at Centre VU for the creation of *Humanitas*.

À ma mère Josée – 1941-2008,  
ma grand-mère Françoise – 1911-2009,  
mon ami Tex – 1947-2010

**VU**

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